



CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

TM

AGENDA TITLE: Report on October 16, 2009 Downtown Summit

MEETING DATE: November 18, 2009

PREPARED BY: City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Provide direction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: On August 19, 2009, the City Council received a report and endorsed holding a one-day "Downtown Summit" to gather and rally downtown property owners and merchants to review the progress of downtown revitalization, assess current conditions, and look towards the future. A little over a decade has passed since the City completed a series of capital improvements to revitalize the downtown core of Lodi.

The Downtown Summit was held October 16th at Hutchins Street Square. Generally, most people considered the event a success with a reasonable level of attendance, dynamic speakers, and an engaged audience. At its informal Shirtsleeve meeting on October 27th, the Council received a preliminary report about the event. Because the Shirtsleeve meeting is informal with no formal action, a report has been brought back to the Council for direction or action as the Council feels appropriate.

The Downtown summit was launched with a survey of visitors, merchants and property owners. Three speakers offered insights, and attendees offered their opinions on priorities and action steps. Many suggestions for further actions were received.

The following are some of the issues identified and discussed:

- Development of housing along the Sacramento Street corridor (or building a "captured audience" for downtown)
- Help or encouragement in assembling and/or preparing sites for development – specifically Lodi Avenue and School and Church Streets
- Encourage the development of under utilized property along Lodi Avenue between School and Elm Street
- Seek a second daytime anchor
- Increase the level of promotions and marketing
- Attract more restaurants
- Develop a directional sign program for downtown
- Seek to form or encourage property owners to participate in a Business Improvement District as a joint effort with business owners
- Recruit more retail, specialty shops

(Note: the above list is not comprehensive, but captures most of the significant suggestions.)

APPROVED: _____

Blair King, City Manager

One will note that the above is an outcome-oriented list, some, but little, discussion occurred with regard to tools, strategies, or applied techniques to achieve desired outcomes. Suggestions for further actions focusing on implementation techniques and strategies could include:

- 1) Receive a presentation on the feasibility of a combined property owner merchant Business Improvement District - (note: a combined BID could serve as a method to pay for a directional sign program);
- 2) Receive a presentation on the costs, timing, feasibility, and practicality of a directional "wayfarer" sign program;
- 3) Direct staff to ensure that proposed General Plan policies are consistent with downtown summit outcomes;
- 4) Provide funding to fill Economic Coordinator position as soon as employee salaries, hours, and/or benefits are restored;
- 5) Commission a market study to identify the feasibility of a daytime anchor and/or update a downtown hotel market study;
- 6) Encourage dialogue between property owners of opportunity sites by inviting them to meet with the Mayor;
- 7) Participate with the Wine Grape Commission and Visit Lodi in a "branding study" and campaign;
- 8) Seek funding, look for opportunities, and remove impediments to encourage mixed use housing development in the downtown area, specifically along Sacramento Street;
- 9) Research the possibility of zoning or standards flexibility or other tools to incentive the establishment of restaurants and wine tasting outlets along School Street;
- 10) Commission a Downtown revitalization implementation plan

The Council is invited to offer comments and provide additions to the above list.

FISCAL IMPACT: With the exception of consumable supplies, costs for the event were provided via private sponsors. The total value of sponsors was approximately \$8,000. The amount is approximate because of in-kind donations. Sponsors: F&M Bank, Rosewood Bar & Grill, Waste Management, Atlas Properties, Kirsten Company, Tokay Development, PG&E, Pennino & Associates, and the Holiday Inn, with help from the Youth Commission.



Blair King, City Manager



Report on Downtown Summit

Presented by Blair King, City Manager
November 18, 2009

Discussion Group Findings

- 5 of 5 determined a directional sign program was a priority
- 4 of 5 felt property owners should participate in a Business Improvement District (3 saying as joint effort with business owners)
- 3 of 5 said extend regional marketing efforts
- 3 of 5 said recruit more retail, specialty stores
- 2 of 5 said recruit a Downtown “anchor”
- 2 of 5 favor Redevelopment Agency assistance
- 2 of 5 said pursue development of Elm/School Streets
- More public art
- Clean sidewalks, update downtown furniture
- Facilitate with City Economic Development position
- Develop mixed-use buildings
- Pursue Downtown hotel

Discussion and Speakers

- Development of housing along the Sacramento Street corridor (or building a “captured audience” for downtown)
- Help or encouragement in assembling and/or preparing sites for development – specifically Lodi Avenue and School and Church Streets
- Encourage the development of under utilized property along Lodi Avenue between School and Elm Street
- Seek a second daytime anchor
- Increase the level of promotions and marketing
- Attract more restaurants
- Develop a directional sign program for downtown
- Seek to form or encourage property owners to participate in a Business Improvement District as a joint effort with business owners
- Recruit more retail, specialty shops

Further Action, Implementation Techniques, and Strategies

- Receive a presentation on the feasibility of a combined property owner merchant Business Improvement District – (note: a combined BID could serve as a method to pay for a directional sign program)
- Receive a presentation on the costs, timing, feasibility, and practicality of a directional “wayfarer” sign program
- Direct staff to ensure that proposed General Plan policies are consistent with Downtown Summit outcomes
- Provide funding to fill Economic Development Coordinator position as soon as employee salaries, hours, and/or benefits are restored
- Commission a market study to identify the feasibility of a daytime anchor and/or update a downtown hotel market study
- Encourage dialogue between property owners of opportunity sites by inviting them to meet with the Mayor
- Participate with the Wine Grape Commission and Visit Lodi in a “branding study” and campaign
- Seek funding, look for opportunities, and remove impediments to encourage mixed use housing development in the downtown area, specifically along Sacramento Street
- Research the possibility of zoning or standards flexibility or other tools to incentive the establishment of restaurants and wine tasting outlets along School Street
- Commission a Downtown revitalization implementation plan